



Transforming Induction Through Mentor Development

Ryan Stewart and Marie Crawford share ideas for differentiating instruction at an NTC mentor training.

Ellen Moir, NTC Executive Director

Thousands of eager, smart, committed, and caring new teachers entered America's classrooms this school year. Each one deserves the chance to shine while building the knowledge and skills to become a top-notch teacher.

School districts across the country have come a long way in recognizing that new teachers need support as they enter the teaching profession. Unfortunately, in too many cases,

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new teachers continue to be given the toughest assignments with what I call *induction lite* to help them meet the needs of their diverse students. These induction programs are a step



in the right direction—they recognize the wealth of knowledge that experienced teachers have to share with novices and pay them stipends to mentor. Unfortunately, many fail to give mentors the training, support, and sanctioned time they need to learn how to really accelerate new teacher practice.

For 18 years the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project has carefully selected mentors and provided them specialized training that turns experienced teachers into outstanding teachers of teachers.

Because we have learned that mentors are the keystones of high quality induction programs, we look for successful teachers who have deep pedagogical knowledge, excellent communication skills, and a passion for training the next generation of teachers. We teach mentors to use the New Teacher Center Formative Assessment System to help new teachers build their instructional practice. Our mentors learn to move beyond emotional support to help new teachers assess their students'

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A Menu for Mentor Growth

Barbara Davis, NTC Assistant Director

Mentor selection is fundamental to any new teacher induction program. It is important to have clear criteria to hire exemplary veteran teachers who can effectively support novices entering our profession. Candidates must exhibit good interpersonal skills, seek new learning, and embrace multiple perspectives. Yet good teachers do not necessarily make good mentors. A mentor must have the skills, knowledge, and abilities to help new teachers become excellent practitioners. They must learn the language and practice to be effective teachers of teachers. Thus, how can we develop mentors who have the knowledge, will, and power to challenge the status quo, to lift our profession to new levels?

In answer to these questions, the New Teacher Center (NTC) has developed a research-based scope and sequence of mentor professional development. We have provided this curriculum—beliefs, concepts, tools, and strategies—to educators across the country. While we know there are fundamental principles that all mentor programs must uphold, we have learned that context matters. Each program's look and feel is different and structures and processes must fit that context. For that reason,

the NTC has developed a menu of trainings and tools for preparing mentors.

For intensive and ongoing mentor professional development, the NTC offers a two-year Mentor Academy series. For districts providing support to mentors who teach as well as work with one or

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two new teachers, we provide a Teacher Induction Module series as well as specialized, stand-alone trainings (see [page 19](#)).

Beyond the trainings, the NTC reinforces mentor skill development by supporting induction program leaders who conduct Mentor Forums. Forums are held weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly depending on the context to address mentors' professional needs. Mentor Forums provide follow-up to trainings and include problem-solving, analyzing new teacher practice (from video), examining formative

assessment tools, practicing coaching language, giving feedback, and setting mentor professional goals.

The curriculum of the academies, trainings, and forums is sequential. Participants begin with studying fundamental principles, mentor roles, the language and behavior of support, how to build trust, and professional teaching standards. As part of their formative experience, mentors learn tools to gather focused observation data as well as how to provide observation feedback in a way that new teachers value and internalize. Mentors also learn to use tools that help new teachers analyze student work, differentiate instruction, and plan lessons.

More advanced professional development activities challenge the mentor to examine issues of equity—particularly around language, race, and culture. They analyze their own beliefs and help new teachers reflect on their practice. NTC provides the conceptual framework to address concerns about what mentors see in classrooms that can interfere with all students having equal access to learning. By practicing the language that supports the difficult yet opportunity-rich conversations about equity, mentors can determine the most strategic approaches to take.



Mentors from the District of
Columbia Public Schools

Research shows that novice teachers are often over-focused on management and control, one way of framing their classroom challenges. In 2004, NTC researchers Betty Achinstein and Adele Barrett explored three frames (adapted from the work of Lee Bolman and Terrance Deal) that explain how mentors can help novices re-diagnose the challenges they face. The concept of *reframing* takes mentoring to a deeper level. The study found that mentors often helped beginning teachers move beyond the managerial frame by introducing new ways of seeing students and the challenges of practice. Achinstein and Barrett report that mentors

used multiple frames for viewing classrooms, including a *managerial frame* that highlights procedures and control of student behavior; the human relations frame that spotlights social systems, individual needs, and relationships in the classroom; and the political frame that identifies inequities, power, and classrooms as arenas for social change. Mentors were more likely to initiate non-managerial frames, using a repertoire of frames, and encouraging new teachers to reframe or reinterpret their experiences. This gave novices new ideas about how to address their challenges more effectively.

The NTC's mentoring curriculum highlights an important component of effective mentoring—sharing one's own thinking and decision-making. Many exemplary teachers engage in teaching intuitively. When mentors describe their pedagogical craft, they communicate *what they do*, *how they do it*, and *why in those ways*. As they articulate aloud how they make decisions about their practice, mentors help new teachers make more thoughtful decisions about their practice. It is no small responsibility to insure that students are taught by professionals who continually reflect, strive for excellence, and are committed to equitable learning for all students. No one is born to assume the challenge of being a mentor, but those who participate in strategically designed professional development do accelerate novice teacher growth. And, at the same time, they become educational leaders who change the status quo.

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New!

NTC Open Enrollment Trainings

The New Teacher Center, in collaboration with partners across the country, now provides open enrollment professional development opportunities for educators who support beginning teachers. This menu of trainings allows educational organizations to choose appropriate support for the growth of mentors, subject matter coaches, supervisors, cooperating teachers, principals and coordinators of teacher induction. The trainings are now offered in various locations throughout the country, with more to be scheduled soon. Visit our website at www.newteachercenter.org for more information.



Mentoring in the Big Apple

A Two-Year Journey in the City of New York

Debbie Feinstein and Shelley Serin, *NTC Outreach Consultants, NYC*

The 2004–2005 school year saw radical changes within the New York City school system. One of these changes significantly influenced how the City's Department of Education (NYCDOE) inducts new teachers. The NYCDOE adopted the New Teacher Center's induction model, which is guided by a philosophy of collaboration, thoughtful recruitment, support for life-long learning and growth, and retention. In doing so, the NYCDOE defined major goals. Mentors will:

- Learn professional teaching standards
- Develop coaching skills based on professional teaching standards as introduced through a series of professional learning experiences (Mentor Academies and Forums)
- Scaffold learning that links standards to practice
- Extend new learning through ongoing experimentation with mentoring processes and tools
- Support with [generative] feedback
- Learn from practice

What supported this change?

The key component to this daunting task was biweekly Mentor Forums held throughout the city's five boroughs. Through a carefully planned structure, and supported by their respective Regional Directors and NTC Mentor Liaisons, eleven new learning communities were created. Every other week, mentors gather to support their new learning. Collaboratively, they explore new concepts, practice new strategies, reflect on

practice, and identify next steps.

What does the Mentor Forum look like?

Those who plan the Mentor Forums use a structure developed by the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project. All Forums build from the same protocol:

- A Connecting Activity
- Problem Pose/Problem Solve
- New Learning
- Reflection
- Feedback for Future Forums

NTC Mentor Academies provide the content for Mentor Forums that present opportunities to dig deeper into new concepts, practice coaching skills, and continue building learning communities and working relationships. During the first



Mentors discuss shared concerns in small groups.



New York City mentors
at a Mentor Forum.

months, Forum facilitators helped new mentors understand the expectations and established effective practice. As the year progressed, the Forum curriculum evolved to address mentor and beginning teacher needs specific to the different regions. Just as mentors help new teachers differentiate instruction for their students, Mentor Forums differentiate for mentor learning. Content includes:

- Mentoring Strategies
- Formative Assessment System (FAS) Tools
- Instruction and Subject Matter Competence
- Mentor Formative Assessment

How do Mentor Forums support new mentors?

Mentor Forums are essential for supporting a profound change in a context as large as New York City. Forums helped the new mentors learn NTC's Formative Assessment System (FAS) process and tools. As they learned FAS concepts and rationales, over four hundred mentors practiced FAS using tools to examine beginning teachers' work.

Each of the eleven learning communities collaboratively established norms and defined context-specific mentor roles. Forums allow colleagues to learn from ongoing mentor issues. Mentors experiment with FAS tools and practice coaching language as well as learn to communicate with site administrators about their work. Using role-plays, problem solving strategies, and structured reflection, mentors continue to understand the adult learner more deeply.

During the 2005–2006 school year, Mentor Forums became essential for the rapid growth and success of the new mentors. They have continued to be a unique learning oasis to resolve issues and co-discover ways to improve teacher practice. Additionally, second-year mentors commit to assisting their new colleagues. They quickly develop professional relationships through coaching partnerships and providing opportunities for field-based shadowing.

How has mentor professional growth been influenced?

First and second-year mentors take pride in supporting the NYCDOE community. They are modern pioneers in an urban setting, facing challenges of scheduling and managing large caseloads. FAS tools and structures help them improve new teacher practice.

Mentors now see themselves as change agents in a system that has provided new leadership opportunities. It has empowered them to seek new learning and address issues once hidden behind closed doors. The Forums

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have begun to break down that *closed-door syndrome* by encouraging collaboration and learning for mentors, teachers, and students.

What are we continuing to learn?

As with any new project, participant dedication sustains the work. The mentors, brave enough to take risks and proud of their impact, have made the NYCDOE initiative a success. Our commitment to welcome novices to the profession, explore with them fresh ideas, and model life-long learning, will fulfill the promise of a quality teacher for every student and sustain the new NYCDOE mentor initiative. ■

Mentor Coaching Partnerships Advance Mentor Practice

Kathy Hope, Program Director, Silicon Valley New Teacher Project, and Rosalie Chako, Professional Development Coordinator, Silicon Valley New Teacher Project

Participating teachers in the Silicon Valley/Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SV/SCNTP) consider their mentors easily accessible life preservers. Similarly, a novice mentor's life preserver is a veteran mentor. Just as the mentor and the novice teacher focus on student work to promote teacher learning and success, mentor coaching partnerships strengthen mentoring skills by focusing on classroom teaching data, professional teaching standards, and formative assessment. Mentor coaching partner conversations promote collaborative problem solving and learning that results in advanced practice.

Professional development is a critical component of the SVNTP. New mentors receive foundational training in the NTC Formative Assessment System (FAS). This is reinforced by job-embedded collaboration at weekly Mentor Forums. In September, a novice mentor is matched with a veteran. Whenever possible, mentors from the same district collaborate, so the coaching

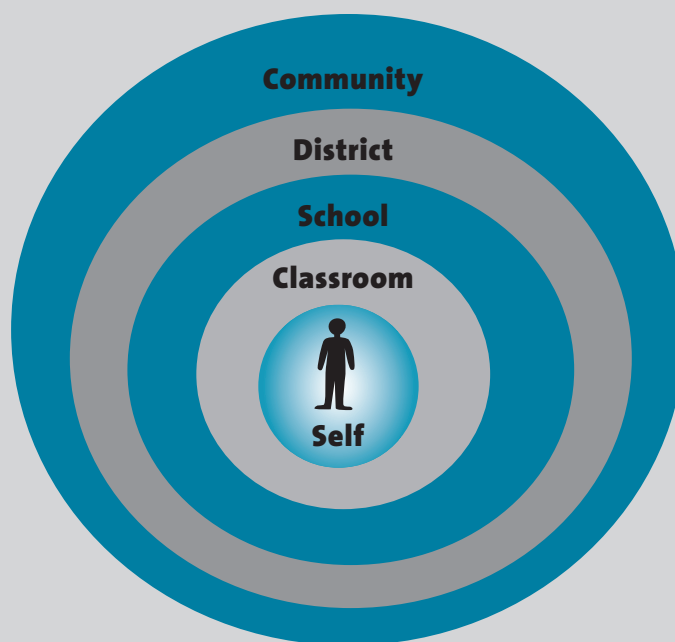
partners share the same fieldwork context, and have easier access to one another. Mentor coaching partnerships, especially when a novice is matched with a veteran with several years of experience, accelerate the beginning mentor's

Mentor coaching partner conversations promote collaborative problem solving and learning that results in advanced practice.

growth. Mentor partners pose and answer questions, problem solve, and reflect. They develop accountability to one another and their respective teachers.

When partners collaborate, the energy and engagement at the weekly mentor forums increases. During this time, they complete a Mentor Collaborative Log to record successes, challenges, and next-steps. The learning is reciprocal. As one coach explains: *My [coaching] partner has a passion for gifted children, which has opened my view of equity for the gifted. My passion for [teaching] ELL and minority children has deepened her view*

Holonomy





Kathy Hope and Rosalie Chako
plan a Mentor Forum.

of equity for struggling learners.

Novice mentors receive validation and encouragement from their more experienced colleagues, which pushes them to take risks and reach a higher level of mentoring. Adult learners value professional development that puts them in charge of their own learning, honors their expertise, and ensures their voices are heard. Coaching partnerships support these needs.

In a survey of sixty SVNTP mentors in the sixth month of their partnerships, 87% responded that having a coaching partner moves their

practice forward: *My coaching partner has been a gift to me all year. She has an energy and clarity that prompts me to thoughtful action. My job would have been 50 times more difficult without her support.*

Holonomy is a term used by Arthur Koestler to describe the tendency of every individual to preserve his/her individuality while functioning as an interdependent part of a larger system. In their book, *The Adaptive School*, Robert Garmston and Bruce Wellman see the success of the individuals depending on the success of the community as a

whole, and the success of the community depending on the growth and development of each member. In many ways, *holonomy* creates concentric life preservers, propelling one toward efficacy, flexibility, craftsmanship, consciousness, and interdependence. By participating in coaching partnerships, mentors see themselves as part of an *holonomous* system.

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Coaching partnerships deepen mentor thinking, increase teacher growth, improve student outcomes, and strengthen learning communities. Coaching partner collaboration helps mentors become strong swimmers who reach for a life preserver less often as they maneuver the unpredictable waters of new teacher induction. ■



Me and My Shadow

A Collaborative Learning Opportunity for Improving Mentor Practice

Marney Cox, NTC Outreach Coordinator

The art of mentoring beginning teachers is complex. Mentors come to their roles with different levels of experience and are constantly seeking to sharpen their skills. The Santa Cruz New Teacher Project provides numerous opportunities for mentor professional development. They include weekly Mentor Forums and a series of trainings for mentors that support them in examining and accelerating their practice.

Our design for mentor development has proven highly successful. However, we found a limited impact when we asked mentors to learn, reflect,

Why not, we asked, have mentors observe one another during their regular meetings with teachers, coach each other, and share reflections?

and determine their next steps individually. Given the number of multi-talented educators focused on the same purpose, we knew that we had an untapped resource that could deepen mentor professional learning. Why not, we asked, have



SCNTP Advisors José Antonio Mesa and Joe Cook discuss coaching strategies

mentors observe one another during their regular meetings with teachers, coach each other, and share reflections?

Mentor shadowing has provided the resonance and depth we sought. The steps in the shadowing process mirror the NTC's Plan-Teach-Reflect cycle. During a planning conference, mentor coaching partners first determine who will shadow whom, then they:

- clarify the context of the meeting with the new teacher
- determine expectations for teacher learning and evidence of success
- explore possible coaching strategies
- identify a method and focus for data collection

The actual shadowing reveals

benefits for the teacher and mentors. During the coaching conversation, both mentors often offer support to the teacher that can result in the teacher's increased learning. As mentors listen to their peer's use of coaching language and strategies, the collaborative conversation supports them as well. In one instance, a mentor noted: *My coaching partner observed a beginning teacher and me analyzing student work and was able to contribute additional ideas for differentiation that hadn't crossed my mind.*

Following the observation, the mentors collaboratively examine and reflect on the data, putting the work under the microscope to deepen their

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Lynn Kepp, NTC Outreach Coordinator, and Robbie Jaffe, NTC Science Education Coordinator

Crafting Unique Professional Development for Online Mentors

Mentor professional development is a key component of any induction program.

Online mentoring provides exciting opportunities for that development. *e-Mentoring for Student Success (eMSS)* is an online mentoring program for beginning secondary science teachers sponsored by a National Science Foundation grant to the National Science Teachers Association, the New Teacher Center at UCSC, and Montana State University's Science/Math Resource Center. Through this program, beginning secondary science teachers are matched with content area mentors. All mentoring interactions occur online at the eMSS site.

Working on this project for the past four years, we have learned that there are unique skills to online mentoring, and it is necessary for mentors to learn

them using the same online context as their interactions with their mentees. Thus, the initial mentor professional development has evolved from one week of face-to-face training to three weeks of online training. After the initial online mentor training, we offer ongoing mentor forum discussion areas. These facilitated areas are only open to mentors and provide a community of learners who support each other as they learn from their similar roles.

Our work has taught us the necessity of structured online activities that mentors and mentees use together. In addition to support and problem solving to help mentors implement the program, providing online professional development requires continuous new learning. A curriculum that combines an instructional focus with support and problem solving creates a balance between meeting the immediate needs of both the mentor and beginning teacher,

encouraging them to engage in conversations about instructional issues such as assessing student understanding, lesson planning, and teaching complex content knowledge and skills. While this curricular plan is similar to the content of face-to-face mentor professional development, the online medium poses no barriers of time and space. Mentors can exchange ideas, problem solve, or meet with their colleagues whenever expedient.

We have learned that continued mentor professional development is essential to any high quality mentor program. The eMSS program is demonstrating its value as a robust medium for online mentor professional development where mentors become part of an effective learning community.

To learn more about NTC's eMSS, visit <http://www.newteachercenter.org/eMSS/index.php> ■

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learning in a way that seldom occurs when reflecting alone. Later in the year, the coaching partners reverse roles.

The value of the shadowing experience is summed up by one mentor: *Having a colleague shadow me, observe my work, and participate in the conversation*

provided me not only the opportunity to reflect on my own practice, but also to learn from her method of inquiry and actions.

SCNTP mentors have come to appreciate the reciprocal benefits of shadowing a coaching partner. It provides an authentic learning experience, a chance to

receive valuable feedback and take part in deep analysis of practice. Mentors find their skills noticeably improved and they quickly learn the meaning of the aphorism: *Never fear shadows. They simply mean there's a light shining nearby.* ■

Complex Mentor Knowledge Focuses New Teachers on Equity

Betty Achinstein, *NTC Researcher*, and Steven Z. Athanases, *Associate Professor of Education, University of California, Davis*

What skills and knowledge must mentors have to help novice teachers meet the needs of diverse learners? In a recent study, we examined how experienced mentors and induction leaders characterize this expertise and what it looks like in practice.

Participants identified four domains of knowledge: *Pedagogy*, *Contexts*, *Learners*, and *Self*. Table 1 illustrates the bi-level nature of these domains. The bottom row indicates how targeting students undergirds mentoring for equity. The upper row (targeting teachers) shows how effective mentors use nuanced approaches to address needs of adult learners. To enact a bi-level knowledge base, mentors assume

a *bi-focal perspective* on teachers and students. While up-close, the mentor focuses on novice knowledge and needs, they simultaneously hold the big picture of student learning and needs. In the *Pedagogy* domain, effective mentors know strategies to teach diverse youth and promote equity. For pedagogy with teachers, mentors need strategies for observing and giving feedback that *focuses*

Table 1. A Bi-Level Knowledge Base for Equity-Focused Mentoring of New Teachers

Knowledge Domain				
	Pedagogy	Contexts	Learners	Self
Mentor's Knowledge Targeting Teachers	Repertoire of mentoring strategies and stances for observation, assessment, feedback, and critique; commitments and practices to focus novice on challenges of inequity in classroom and beyond	Embedded professional contexts; broader social contexts of schooling and teaching; leadership and change agency	Assessment of novice assets and needs on issues of equity; new teacher as adult learner; novice knowledge, strategies, and cultural competence; novice reflectivity level and receptivity to change	Ways to focus the novice on own identity vis-à-vis student diversity
Mentor's Knowledge Targeting Students	Wide repertoire of strategies to serve all learners; repertoire of strategies to serve culturally and linguistically diverse youth and to promote equity	Local school culture: student, parent, and community; broader social and structural issues of inequity and discrimination affecting students	Assessment of students' funds of knowledge and challenges to deficit views; learning theory and culturally responsive learning theory	Mentor self-knowledge regarding student diversity and equity; awareness of own biases, stances, and interactions with students

Adapted from Achinstein & Athanases, 2006

Steven Z. Athanases and Betty Achinstein receive the Association of Teacher Educators Distinguished Research in Teacher Education Award in Atlanta, Georgia, February 2006.

the novice on classroom inequities. For contexts that target students, mentors use awareness of local and larger issues of inequities. The upper row shows how effective mentoring for equity is embedded in a new teacher's complex professional world that the mentor must help negotiate and often transform.

While mentors build rapport and understand individual needs and readiness, they also maintain larger goals.



In *Knowledge of Learners*, the bottom row shows that mentors need to know how new teachers can learn about their diverse students. The upper row shows how effective mentors know new teachers well to guide them in pedagogy that affirms equity for students. While mentors build rapport and understand individual needs and readiness, they also maintain larger goals. The last column shows that effective mentors reflect on their own understandings and biases and help novices do the same.

A Vignette of the Knowledge Base in Practice

Sonya (pseudonym), a White woman, articulated self-knowledge about equity: *I feel as a teacher and a mentor if you*

are not consistently challenging the system, you're furthering it. Maggie, a White woman, was a new teacher at a K–5 school with predominantly Latino, low-income English learner (EL) students. Maggie taught the “low” language ability-tracked 4th grade. Sonya addressed Maggie’s beliefs and practices related to ELs and her capacity to differentiate instruction. Sonya found Maggie shifted instruction downward, not challenging learners or recognizing varied needs. Sonya tapped her pedagogical knowledge for equity by articulating high expectations for all students and the importance of differentiation. By tapping her contextual knowledge, Sonya situated the labeling of “low learners” in

inequitable school practices, bringing a larger equity lens to classroom interactions.

In mentoring conferences Sonya pushed Maggie’s thinking about fostering “dependence” among ELs by repeatedly reading aloud to them, rarely asking them to develop their own reading skills and academic language. She wanted to help Maggie differentiate instruction, address stages of students’ language development, and resist teaching to the lowest common denominator.

Sonya found her opening when Maggie noted she didn’t know what students could do independently. Sonya shared ways to differentiate, with more

ACHINSTEIN AND ATHANASES
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Using Mentor Pre-Assessment Tools

Moving Students, Beginning Teachers, and Mentors Forward!

Rain Bongolan, NTC Coordinator, English Learner Instruction, and
Laura Gschwend, NTC Outreach Coordinator

If a student's achievement scores are like 'the tip of the iceberg' what lies below the surface? What else should we know about a student other than what that tip might suggest?

Research shows a direct correlation between teachers' use of pre- and formative assessment strategies and student achievement, suggesting that knowing a student well across a wide range of instructional domains gives teachers a definite edge when crafting instruction.

In many classrooms, especially urban and secondary, new teachers need help getting to know their students well enough to teach them effectively. Historically, such NTC Formative Assessment Tools as *Assembling a Class Profile by Synthesizing Student Data* and *Determining Flexible Groups* have helped new teachers learn about their students in order to maximize achievement. Further, mentors use the data by asking:

- What does my beginning teacher know about each student beyond his/her state standardized test scores?
- How can teachers differentiate instruction to meet learning

goals using what they discover about their students?

The New Teacher Center's Pre-Assessment Iceberg

To make the best use of all data, teachers and their mentors must uncover what undergirds that data. The *Pre-Assessment Iceberg* shows four types of pre-assessment data (figure 1) mentors can use to help new teachers develop awareness of and planning for increased student engagement, motivation, and knowledge. By referencing this tool, beginning teachers and their mentors together can identify and/or develop pre-assessments that allow them to know students well enough to effectively differentiate instruction.

The *Pre-Assessment Iceberg* assists mentors in expanding pre-assessment across four domains:

1. *Sociocultural, Linguistic, Literacy Domain*—A student's culture, ethnicity, social values, linguistic experience and stage

of language acquisition.

Data can be discovered via pre-assessments including literacy profiles and memoirs, primary language assessments, non-school literacy experiences, and preference surveys.

2. *Personal Domain*—A student's learning profile created via pre-assessments that identify learning styles/modalities, multiple intelligences, interests, life experiences, aptitudes and talents, and career goals.
3. *Metacognitive Domain*—A student's habits of mind revealed via surveys and interviews that identify learning goals, time management habits, motivation, persistence, effort, and attitudes towards learning.
4. *Academic Literacy Domain*—A student's content area literacy, academic achievement in reading, writing, speaking, and listening demonstrated via district, school, and department assessments.

How the Pre-Assessment Iceberg supports teacher and mentor development

Mentors play a vital role in helping teachers dig below the surface of standardized achievement scores uncovering

the strengths and challenges students bring to the learning process. Providing beginning teachers with this support increases the likelihood that their instruction will move ALL students forward.

Early in the year, reflecting on types of pre-assessment data in preparation for *Assembling a Class Profile*, both mentor and beginning teacher can use the *Pre-Assessment Iceberg* to identify and deepen their understanding of student strengths and challenges. Later in the year, as teacher and mentor engage in *Analysis of Student Work*, the *Pre-Assessment Iceberg* can be used to determine how to leverage student strengths or challenges. Referencing such a tool to understand students whose work is approaching or far below standard helps determine future flexible groupings and tiered instruction.

The *Pre-Assessment Iceberg* also serves as a visual anchor for inquiry during Mentor Forums, mentor leadership meetings, conversations between coaching partners, or in workshops on using data to inform instruction. The *Pre-Assessment Iceberg* focuses mentor reflection and questions on next steps for beginning teachers and their students.

Summary

Engaging in ongoing examinations of achievement data and improving student achievement are essential for school-wide and individual

BONGOLAN AND GSCHWEND
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Figure 1

Pre-Assessment “Iceberg”

Student Achievement Data

Results of standardized assessments:

- (State) standards test scores
- (State) English Language Development (ELD) test levels
- (State) High school exit exam scores

Discovering data beneath the surface through
4 Types of Pre-Assessment

Type IV: Assessing Academic Literacy Domain

Activities, formats, beginning of the year or unit “pre-tests,” surveys, prompts, tools that identify students’...

- High-utility academic language skills
- Subject-specific knowledge and skills
- Reading proficiencies

Type III: Assessing Meta-cognitive Domain

Activities, formats, surveys, prompts, tools that identify students’...

- Time management and goal setting skills
- Knowledge and application of organizational skills that support task completion
- Access to strategies and conditions that promote effective study habits and goal-setting in and out of school

Type II: Assessing Personal Domain

Activities, formats, surveys, prompts, tools that identify students’...

- Multiple intelligences and preferred learning styles
- School and non-school goals, career and other interests

Type I: Assessing Sociocultural, Linguistic Literacy Domain

Activities, formats, surveys, prompts, tools that identify students’ current...

- Sociocultural, ethnic, and linguistic profiles
- Proficiencies in both primary or predominant language and ELD
- Non-school literacies e.g., language skills used in interactions among or on behalf of peers, family members, co-workers, personnel of community or governmental agencies, commercial businesses; other forms of student’s self-expression
- Perceptions about the degree to which the school community authentically
 - 1) respects the student, 2) sets high expectations for the student, 3) provides culturally and linguistically-responsive support for the student and his/her family



Supporting NTC Mentors across the Nation

Jan Miles, NTC Program Director

There was some skepticism as to whether this program from Santa Cruz, California would be effective in our urban setting.

—Flavia Gordon Gunter, Mentor, Atlanta Public Schools (APS)

A federal study, *Impact Evaluation of Teacher Induction Programs*, is looking at the effects of different models of new teacher induction in large urban school districts across the nation. It compares new teachers who are experiencing the NTC induction model to control groups receiving their district's current mentoring program. The study will measure new teacher retention and student achievement over five years in Philadelphia, Milwaukee, Boston, Chicago, Columbia (SC), as well as Miami-Dade, Atlanta, and Birmingham.

I kept in my mind the words from the very first Mentor Academy—do whatever it takes to build a relationship with your teachers and roll up your sleeves to help. This relationship will establish a rapport with your teachers that will allow you to share pedagogy and maintain to the focus of student achievement.

—Kimberly Turner, Mentor, APS

In August 2005, twenty newly hired mentors gathered in California for the first of eight Mentor Academies. As we began

the journey of learning the art and craft of instructional mentoring, friendships blossomed, horizons expanded, and mentors discovered that despite their diverse contexts they had much in common.

As we began the journey of learning the art and craft of instructional mentoring, friendships blossomed, horizons expanded, and mentors discovered that despite their diverse contexts they had much in common.

We were challenged to support the mentors more than 2,500 miles away as they practiced the nuances of skillful mentoring and supported their novice teachers. Many mentors support new teachers in navigating situational and systemic challenges such as transient student populations, difficult work conditions, and little choice in teaching assignments or instructional programs. By October of our first year, reality had dashed much of the new teachers' sparkle, optimism, and hopes.

We weren't scheduled to meet as a cohort for nearly three months after the initial Mentor Academy. In the meantime, how would their new mentoring skills continue to grow, particularly using FAS tools that were new to them, without ongoing face-to-face collaboration? In spite of monthly visits from their NTC Outreach Consultant, the wisdom of the collective group would be hard to tap. As the mentors sent us weekly logs—records of challenges and successes—we went to the drawing board to design responsive supports.

Weekly Forums provided me with a gathering place and time that fostered trust and confidentiality with my mentoring colleagues. They allowed me the time to get the professional development from my colleagues that aided me to assist my beginning teachers.

—Sandra Turner-Moultrie, Mentor, APS

We designed weekly Mentor Forums. They included relevant learning activities on how to use NTC Formative Assessment System (FAS) tools, solve problems, and learn from success. Weekly feedback from the Mentor Forums helped us fine-tune the curriculum.

Mentor Forums serve as our source for support for each other as we brainstormed

Atlanta mentors, Flavia Gordon Gunter, Kimberly Turner and Sandra Turner-Moultrie discuss new teacher support strategies at a weekly Mentor Forum.

strategies and solutions to our challenges.

—Flavia Gordon Gunter,
Mentor, APS

Our curriculum ranged from the use of a formative assessment tool to setting professional goals. We often structured discussions of professional readings by such authors as Jonathan Kozol and Carol Ann Tomlinson. And, as we find in all Mentor Forums, perhaps the most valuable part of the curriculum is the time spent sharing successes and challenges, focused together on creating ways to support growth.

...as we find in all Mentor Forums, perhaps the most valuable part of the curriculum is the time spent sharing successes and challenges, focused together on creating ways to support growth.

After only one year, many of the teachers have become leaders in their schools. One of my teachers was selected to attend the International Reading Association meeting in Chicago. Another Beginning Teacher (BT) in a



different school was asked by her principal to make a presentation on Writer's Workshop. After using the Class Profile with two BTs it became apparent to them that in order to teach their third graders about the world, their students needed to be exposed to the world. The students in their school live in an economically deprived neighborhood divided from the wealthy downtown district by one street. Many of the students had never been downtown. They began planning a field trip to Savannah to complement their Georgia history unit, and I [helped them] incorporate science, language arts and math into the trip as well. One of these BTs is the Third Grade Team Leader this year. Another BT at another school is the Chair of the Student Council this year.

—Flavia Gordon Gunter

The results are already evident. Teachers are staying in teaching. What is more important, they are

demonstrating the confidence, initiative, and leadership that one might expect from a fifth-year teacher. And as important, these mentors are becoming leaders in the school communities they have been a part of for years.

The journey through mentoring has been long and emotionally challenging...As I saw my teachers develop into effective teachers, it became apparent that this program is effective in any setting. I saw as much growth in teachers who teach in low socio-economic areas as those in high... My development as a mentor has been phenomenal, and I attribute it to the outstanding New Teacher Center program, the support I received of my other mentors and to my school district, and the Atlanta Public Schools for taking the risk to be involved in this study bringing the work of the New Teacher Center to our district.

—Flavia Gordon Gunter ■



Leadership Learning and Coaching

Betsy Warren, NTC Outreach Coordinator

Patrick (all names are pseudonyms) walks onto his campus early on Monday to make sure that there are no problems from any weekend incidents. He is in his second year as a principal, his first year as principal of the district's largest elementary school that was recently classified as a *program improvement* school. Patrick loves his school and knows he has to help his staff work through hard issues about classroom instruction and school culture.

Seventy-five miles away, Kate arrives at her suburban high school that is experiencing rapidly changing demographics. As a second-year principal, she is challenged with helping staff meet the diverse needs of English learners. The administrative team is new to the school, and Kate knows she has to help them collaborate to be successful.

Almost 400 miles from Patrick and Kate, Ricardo is on a fast track in his rural school district that serves a large migrant community. He taught five years and then moved into the assistant principalship at a local middle school. This is Ricardo's first year as a principal. He thought transitioning into the principal role would be easy, but he is discovering that his prior experience didn't prepare him for the responsibilities he now faces. He questions his decision to become the principal and whether he should resign.

Different schools. Different needs. Different principals. One thing in common: each principal will be supported for two years by a school leadership coach.

Their coaches are part of a growing network that mentors new administrators. They are much more than feel good emotional supports; they are trained and certified as Leadership Coaches in the Blended Coaching Model developed by NTC's School Leadership Development Team.

What Patrick's, Kate's, and Ricardo's coaches have in common are track records as successful site administrators and dedicated time for coaching.

What Patrick's, Kate's, and Ricardo's coaches have in common are track records as successful site administrators and dedicated time for coaching. Patrick's coach is a full-time member of NTC's School Leadership Development Team. She observes three to six hours a week at his site and analyzes that data with him every two weeks. Their biweekly meetings focus on Patrick's goals for himself, the school, students, and staff.

Together they work on Patrick's growth as a developing leader.

Kate's coach is a newly retired high school principal from a neighboring district. She is part of multi-district coaching consortium that provides quality support to novice administrators. Long ago, consortium members recognized the need to better prepare their districts for impending administrator retirement throughout the state. Kate's coach was chosen because she led a school through a similar change in demographics and helped her faculty meet the needs of English learners. Her leadership capacity will help build others' capacities.

Ricardo's coach helps him through the intellectual and emotional challenges by providing tools for on-the-job learning. Ricardo is enrolled in an alternative credential program offered by NTC and the Association of California School Administrators. The program allows novice administrators to clear their administrative credential through a two-year coaching relationship designed to move novices from operational managers to instructional leaders. The partnership also allows his coach to continue learning how to improve his practice.

All of these coaches are part of a learning community that meets once a month locally and four times yearly in a regional coaching network developed and facilitated by NTC master

A beginning administrator meets with her NTC coach.

coaches. Learning from each other is a commitment. Coaching is a conscious art that builds on the coaches' experience, uses a blend of facilitative and instructional strategies, and requires well-honed coaching qualities—rapport, trust, listening, and questioning.

Leadership coaches come to the local and state wide coaches network meetings to fine-tune their coaching skills and stay current. Each session provides opportunities to practice and receive feedback. Network facilitators help the group deepen their understanding of the Blended Coaching Model. The coaches develop further by creating case studies of their work and collaboratively sharing new strategies.

These coaches value the ongoing professional development that results from learning with the Coaching



Leaders to Attain Student Success (CLASS) Network of School Leadership Coaches offered by NTC: *Networking with other coaches gives me an opportunity to collaboratively solve problems and build knowledge. It also allows me a chance to experience being a coachee (in coaching practice activities) to build my own reflective practice and receptiveness to feedback.*

As Patrick finishes his early morning campus inspection, he heads to his office mentally going over his day: *Okay, I'm meeting*

with my coach at 10:30. I really need help with some things. I'm glad she'll be here.

At the same time, his coach is preparing for her meeting with Patrick, reviewing her coaching log and downloading some promised resources. She reflects: *Oh, good! I get time with Patrick today. I can't wait to hear how he handled the dilemma we worked on. Today might be the right time to discuss how he'll confront the sensitive staff issue that's been on the back burner.* ■

BONGOLAN AND GSCHWEND
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teacher planning. Mentors and beginning teachers can benefit from knowing:

- Students' achievement scores are just the tip of the iceberg; they provide neither a comprehensive nor equitable picture of students.
- To move students (especially English learners and Standard English learners) forward, it is essential that educators learn the depth of students' prior knowledge, learning strengths, and current skills for setting and attaining goals. Teachers

who know their students' previous literacy instruction, experiences, sociocultural facets, and literacy skills in both the first and second language are better prepared to meet learning needs.

- Learning occurs when new concepts are linked to students' prior knowledge. New knowledge must be *springboarded* from what was pre-assessed.
- When teachers and their mentors use appropriate pre-

assessment tools, they are able to identify and build on these springboards.

Students thrive when their teachers ask: Who are my students? What strengths and challenges do they bring to today's learning and content? How can I use what I have learned to move ALL my students forward? The *Pre-Assessment Iceberg* assists mentors and new teachers as they inquire below the surface and find real instructional opportunities for students. ■

MOIR *continued from page 1*

diverse needs, create effective lessons, and use differentiated teaching strategies. Since they are released full time to work with 13–15 new teachers in their classrooms during the school day, mentors develop a deep understanding of their new teachers' needs and work throughout the year to help them raise student achievement while building the foundation of an outstanding teaching career.

Just as new teachers need ongoing classroom-based support, mentors need professional development embedded in the daily challenges of their work. In the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, we offer mentors weekly Mentor Forums that provide additional training in the fundamentals of mentoring and ongoing

opportunities for problem solving and reflection on practice. Our mentors strengthen

Just as new teachers need ongoing classroom-based support, mentors need professional development embedded in the daily challenges of their work.

our induction model as they construct together more powerful support strategies. Their intense focus on building new teacher practice and deep involvement in work at school sites means that their own instructional practice grows as well. Mentors develop new confidence in their ability to

be educational leaders whether they return to the classroom or assume new roles in their school districts.

I hope that this issue of *Reflections* will showcase for you the critical role mentor development plays in an effective teacher induction program. Nothing is more important to students than the quality of their teachers, and nothing is more important to new teachers than the quality of their mentors. Learning to translate the deep knowledge of teaching and learning held by mentor teachers into effective support can transform *induction lite* into powerful support programs for the thousands of new teachers who serve our students. ■

ACHINSTEIN AND ATHANASES
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intensive vocabulary work for some while pushing for independent comprehension for others. She provided strategies judiciously, not wanting scaffolding for *the very beginners [to] keep the others from trying to get it on their own first*. Sonya highlighted her knowledge of student learners and pedagogy.

The mentor kept pace with the novice, respecting Maggie's needs as an adult learner, suggesting equitable practices but not taking over: *I was constantly scanning and searching for an opportunity in the [mentoring] discussion*. Sonya used student observation data to broaden Maggie's thinking.

Sonya also asked questions and gave prompts, pointing out that there was almost *no higher level thinking in the lesson*, and offered suggestions.

Sonya also saw her role as reaching out to educators at the school: *I have to try and impact higher level things that I know are not good for kids. It's an activist role if you get them to question academic tracking and [then] work with a number of teachers and the principal to encourage them to question the system*. Tapping her bi-level knowledge of mentoring for diversity and equity—developed through ongoing professional development—Sonya illustrates the challenges and promise of

mentoring new teachers to meet diverse needs of diverse youth.

For further information on this study see:

Achinstein, B., & Athanases, S. Z. (2006). Mentors' knowledge of equity and diversity: Maintaining a bi-focal perspective on new teachers and their students. In B. Achinstein & S. Z. Athanases (Eds.), *Mentors in the making: Developing new leaders for new teachers* (pp. 38-54). New York: Teachers College Press.

Achinstein, B., & Athanases, S. Z. (2005) Focusing new teachers on diversity and equity: Toward a knowledge base for mentors. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(7), 843-862. ■

TRAINING MENU *continued from page 2*

Mentor Academy

Takes place over two years and consists of eight, three-day sessions includes training and materials for formative assessment

YEAR ONE

Mentor Academy 1

Foundations in Mentoring & Formative Assessment

Fundamental knowledge, skills, and understanding for those who work with beginning teachers

Mentor Academy 2

Coaching and Observation Strategies

How to collect observation data related to professional teaching standards and share it to improve new teacher practice

Mentor Academy 3

Analysis of Student Work

Strategies to help new teachers use student work to guide instruction.

Mentor Academy 4

Planning and Designing Professional Development for New Teachers

Mentors learn strategies to bring new teachers together for meaningful learning.

YEAR TWO

Mentor Academy 5

Coaching in Complex Situations

Mentor formative assessment, and how to successfully engage in more complex coaching conversations.

Mentor Academy 6

Mentoring for Equity

Provides a framework for mentoring on issues of race, language, and culture related to professional teaching standards

Mentor Academy 7

Artifacts of Practice

Analysis of data of practice, mentor formative assessment, and program improvement.

Mentor Academy 8

Teachers of Teachers

Strategies to build mentor and teacher leadership skills to impact and advocate for induction

Teacher Induction Modules

Can be scheduled separately or in a series includes training and formative assessment materials

An Introduction to Instructional Mentoring (2 days)

Mentors learn how to respond to new teachers' needs by assessing practice

Setting Professional Goals (1 day)

Deepens mentors' understanding of the role of formative assessment by establishing goals based on both student and professional teaching standards

Coaching and Observation Strategies (2 days)

Assists mentors in collecting and sharing observation data aligned with professional teaching standards to improve new teachers practice.

Analysis of Student Work (2 days)

Provides mentors with tools and strategies to help beginning teachers identify student needs, differentiate instruction, and reach equitable learning outcomes.

Stand-Alone Trainings

Designing and Presenting Professional Development for New Teachers (2 days)

Mentors learn strategies to bring new teachers together for meaningful learning.

Coaching in Complex Situations (1 day)

How mentors successfully impact practice in more complex coaching situation.

Mentoring for Equity (2 days)

A framework for mentoring on issues of race, language, and culture related to professional teaching standards.

Mentoring for English Language Learners (2 days)

Strategies that help mentors provide support to beginning teachers with English learners.

Creating and Facilitating Meetings that

Promote Mentor Development (1 day)

An examination of the process and structures of Mentor Forums

Role of the Site Administrator in

Supporting New Teachers (1 day)

Strategies for principals and other site administrators to partner with mentors for beginning teacher support.

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